

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, claim 1 is amended. Accordingly, claims 1-20 are pending and under consideration.

Rejection of Claims 1-2, 4, 8-9, 11-12 and 17-21 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 1-2, 4, 8-9, 11-12 and 17-21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,740,853 issued to Johnson et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Johnson") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,761,023 issued to Lue et al (hereinafter referred to as "Lue"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Because pages 11-12 of the Office Action indicates that Johnson and Lue do not disclose "wherein the cooling gas is introduced into each predetermined area synchronously with the introduction of the cooling gas into at least one other of the predetermined areas," as recited in claims 17 and 20, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 17 and 20 are patentably distinguishable from the cited references.

Claims 18 and 19 depend from claim 17 and include all of the features of claim 17. Therefore, for at least these reasons, claims 18 and 19 are patentably distinguishable from the cited references.

In addition, claim 21 is cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Johnson and Lue, taken separately or in combination, do not disclose, teach, or suggest at least, "wherein the helium gas is introduced into the center part of the wafer and edge part of the wafer synchronously," as recited in claim 1. Therefore, for at least these reasons, claim 1 is patentably distinguishable from the cited references.

Claims 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, and 12 depend from claim 1 and include all of the features of claim 1. Therefore, for at least these reasons, claims 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, and 12 are also patentably distinguishable from the cited references.

Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claims 3, 5-7, 10 and 13-16 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 3, 5-7, 10 and 13-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson in view of Lue and U.S. Patent No. 6,677,167 issued to Kanno et al (hereinafter referred to as "Kanno"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Johnson, Lue, and Kanno, taken separately or in combination, do not disclose, teach, or suggest at least, "wherein the helium gas is introduced into the center part of the wafer and edge part of the wafer synchronously," as recited in claim 1. Therefore, for at least these reasons, claim 1 is patentably distinguishable from the cited references.

Claims 3, 5-7, 10, and 13-16 depend from claim 1 and include all of the features of claim 1. Therefore, for at least these reasons, claims 3, 5-7, 10, and 13-16 are also patentably distinguishable from the cited references

Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claims 17-20 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 17-20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson in view of Lue and U.S. Patent Re. 36,810 issued to Arasawa et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Arasawa"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Johnson, Lue, and Arasawa, taken separately or in combination, do not disclose, teach, or suggest at least, "a plurality of sealing members mounted on the first surface and which directly contact and divide the wafer into a plurality of predetermined areas when the wafer is mounted on the body;... wherein the cooling gas is introduced into each predetermined area synchronously with the introduction of the cooling gas into at least one other of the predetermined areas," as recited in claim 17.

The Office Action indicates that Johnson and Lue do not teach the synchronous introduction of cooling gas. In addition, Arasawa and Johnson do not disclose a plurality of sealing members. Because Johnson and Arasawa do not disclose the use of seals, each passage of Arasawa and Johnson supplies gas to the entire wafer instead of supplying gas to predetermined areas, which have been sealed.

The Office Action does not articulate a reason why one having ordinary skill in the art would combine Lue with both Arasawa and Johnson. Therefore, for at least these reasons, claim 17 is patentably distinguishable from the cited references.

Claims 18 and 19 depend from claim 17 and include all of the features of claim 17. Therefore, for at least these reasons, claims 18 and 19 are patentably distinguishable from the cited references.

Similarly, Johnson, Lue, and Arasawa, taken separately or in combination, do not disclose, teach, or suggest at least, "providing seals which directly contact and divide the wafer into a plurality of predetermined areas when the wafer is mounted on the body;...wherein the

cooling gas is introduced into each predetermined area synchronously with the introduction of the cooling gas into at least one other of the predetermined areas," as recited in claim 20. Therefore, for at least these reasons, claim 20 is patentably distinguishable over the cited references.

Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Summary

Claims 1-20 are pending and under consideration. It is respectfully submitted that none of the references taken alone or in combination disclose the present claimed invention.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

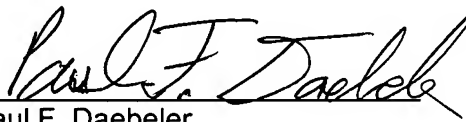
Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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